

November 28, 2006

Re: HB 5470, The Michigan Medical Marijuana Act

Honorable Representative Sheen:

We are writing you in support of HB 5470, The Michigan Medical Marijuana Act. We understand that this proposed bill will receive a hearing in the House Government Operations Committee, of which you are a member.

As the parents of a 3 year old child, we are of course concerned about children having access to marijuana. We don't want our daughter abusing drugs when she becomes a teenager. HB 5470 has nothing to do with children. It is about the right of a free people to make their own health care choices without undue interference from an intrusive, Big Brother government.

Cannabis sativa, the plant commonly called marijuana, is a naturally occurring herb, created by God and given to us for our responsible use. It has a documented history as a medicinal herb stretching back to 3,000 BCE China. And in 5,000 years of recorded history, there is not a single case of anyone suffering a death from overdose or allergic reaction to this plant. Even common aspirin kills over 1,000 Americans every single year.

Smoking anything is not good for someone's lungs. That's just common sense. But there are many ways to ingest marijuana and receive its healthful benefits other than smoking it. It can be vaporized, made into teas or baked into cookies. Its active ingredient can even be extracted and made into suppositories. Using the raw plant Cannabis sativa to promote health is no different than eating oranges for their vitamin C or eating a diet rich in iron to prevent anemia.

Allowing adults to use marijuana medicinally does not "send the wrong message" to children anymore than any number of other accepted pharmaceuticals that also have potential for abuse. Doctors can and do prescribe sedatives, stimulants, opiates and even cocaine as part of recognized medical practice. No one credibly claims that this sends some kind of wrong message to children. And what's the "right" message anyway? That sick people should just shut up and suffer in silence?

Representative Sheen, please support HB 5470 and get government out of our private health care decisions. This would be the truly conservative thing to do.

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Michael & Caralee Furrow
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Copy: House Committee Gov't operations